

MINUTES
St. Louis County Board of Commissioners Solid Waste Subcommittee
Northland Office Building,
1st Floor Environmental Services Conference Room #118
Virginia, Minnesota
June 27, 2011

Call to Order: Steve Raukar called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m.

Members Present: Commissioner Mike Forsman, Commissioner Keith Nelson, Commissioner Steve Raukar, and Commissioner Peg Sweeney.

Others Present: Diane Hildreth, Mark St. Lawrence, Terry Soderberg, and Ted Troolin, Environmental Services Department; Tom Lucas, Northeast Technical Services and Chris Strub, Northern Minnesota Recycling.

Approval of Minutes: Upon motion by Commissioner Nelson and second by Commissioner Sweeney, the minutes of the April 25, 2011, Solid Waste Subcommittee meeting were approved as presented.

Director's Update: Troolin verbally went over the Director's Report. The Department sent out requests for quotes to four firms to conduct a waste composition study. The waste study will be compiled from a mix of 50 residential, commercial, and industrial loads of waste from all areas of the County, which will be separated into 51 waste categories. The cost for the waste study will be around \$15,000 and will be used as an assessment tool for the Department's long term planning. The Department will look into the availability of financial assistance from the State to complete a pilot waste composition study project for demolition material.

The Department has submitted the 2010 SCORE report to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

The Department's Solid Waste Plan expires August 2012. Troolin met with MPCA staff to discuss the State's intent to have counties submit joint Solid Waste Plans with other counties located within a region identified by the State as a Centroid. St. Louis County's centroid includes Carlton County, Lake County and the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD). The MPCA would like the Centroid to plan together and have the Solid Waste Management Plan reflect what each Centroid is doing as part of a broader plan. This is not required by law and Troolin informed MPCA staff that St. Louis County will not include additional Centroid information in the St. Louis County Plan. The Solid Waste Division of the MPCA is currently undergoing management changes. Dave Benke will be the new MPCA Solid Waste Division Director. Troolin will keep the Commissioners updated.

The Hibbing Transfer Station operations contract expires at the end of 2011. There are two (2) one (1) year extensions available. The Department intends to offer the existing contractor, Kangas Excavating a one year extension.

The Department extended the blacktop area at the County 77 canister site.

The Hibbing demolition facility is in the process of being expanded and re-permitted. The permit process may be impacted by the potential State shutdown. The facility can not open and construction can not begin until the permit is approved by the MPCA.

The Department continues to work with the Public Works Department on the Regional Landfill road paving project which is expected to be completed this summer.

Revenue from the scrap metal and appliance recycling contracts has increased from last year. Terry Soderberg continues to work with the contractor and site attendants on removal of the appliance/scrap metal piles from the sites.

Three area schools districts have applied for the recycling grant program funding. Two school districts have asked for extensions. Staff continue to coordinate with school officials on the overall school recycling program.

The Department has purchased 512 compost bins for distribution to residents in the St. Louis County solid waste management area. The cost is \$15 with a limit of one per household. The bins are available at the Regional Landfill, Aurora, Brookston, Cook, Hibbing, and Northwoods Transfer stations.

The Department participated in household pharmaceutical collections with Sheriff's Department and Drug Enforcement Administration staff at sites in Hibbing, Tower and Virginia. Over 200 pounds of household pharmaceuticals were dropped off at these collection sites. The Department will work with the St. Louis County Sheriff on holding a future collection in Ely.

The Department had a month lease on a backhoe in an effort to increase the tons of waste being hauled per load and reduce the number of loads hauled from the Cook transfer station to the Regional Landfill. The trailers can haul up to 20 tons of garbage and the average loads have been approximately 12 tons. Department staff will compile the cost of equipment versus transportation costs and update the group at a future SWSC meeting. The Department is purchasing a small backhoe for the Northwoods Transfer Station to help increase tons/trailer loads from the transfer station.

2012 Solid Waste Fees: Handouts on the 2012 tip fee/rental service fee scenarios and the proposed 2012 tipping fees were given to the group. Troolin reviewed the Department's recommendation from the April SWSC meeting with the group: the Department recommended to raise the tipping fees for 2012 on Mixed Solid Waste (MSW) from \$39/ton to \$43.50/ton; Mixed industrial waste from \$39/ton to \$43.50/ton; Demolition from \$34/ton to \$36/ton and Contaminated Demolition from \$39/ton to \$55/ton. The Department proposed to raise the residential service fee from \$58/year to \$60/year; raise the seasonal service fee from \$19.72/year to \$20/year; and commercial properties which vary from \$58 - \$174/year to \$60 - \$180/year. Soderberg reviewed each line item increase with the Commissioners. The Department will look into the option of increasing the per bag fee on MSW as an additional revenue source. The Department feels these increases are necessary to maintain a sustainable fund balance. Discussion on the proposed 2012 increases followed. Due to time constraints of this meeting, the Department will submit the proposed 2012 fee schedule to Administration by the July deadline. The proposed 2012 fees will be discussed at upcoming SWSC meetings and presented for final board approval in November.

Facility/Haulage Operations: The current recyclable materials haulage and processing contract will expire September 30, 2011. There are a total of four (4) two (2) year contract extensions available. The Department is recommending one two (2) year extension with the current contractor.

Textile Recycling Options: The Department has been contacted by a private entity to place textile bins at the Regional Landfill. These bins would be placed at the site at no cost/obligation to the County and would give residents a final opportunity to recycle their clothes rather than being landfilled. Department staff will review this request and update the group at a future SWSC meeting.

Cardboard Recycling Pilot Program: Due to an increase in cardboard revenue, the Department will be expanding the number of cardboard recycling containers. Cardboard will now be accepted at the Cotton, French and Soudan canister sites, Brookston, Cook and Northwoods transfer stations, and the Regional Landfill.

Landfill Gas Program: Mark St. Lawrence gave a summary of the landfill gas feasibility study from the April 2011 meeting and stated the recommendation to the Department was to flare the landfill gas. A landfill in Sioux Falls, South Dakota is looking at upgrading their landfill gas management system and has a five year old flaring system for sale. The Department is interested in possibly purchasing this used flaring system. Department staff are researching greenhouse gas credits to offset the cost of the flaring system. St. Lawrence will update the group as more information becomes available.

Regional Landfill Update: The 2011 waste tonnage reports are at the same volumes as 2010. The upgraded spray irrigation system is working well. To date, 1.7 million gallons of leachate has been sprayed. NTS staff will give a leachate report at a SWSC meeting this fall.

Public Comment Period: Chris Strub, Northern Minnesota Recycling addressed the Commissioners about demolition haulage concerns. The Department continues working to develop a demolition waste plan that would focus on consistency in demolition waste management and demolition load haulage throughout St. Louis County. Discussion on licensing demolition waste haulers and increasing demolition fees followed.

Scheduling Next Meeting: The next Solid Waste Subcommittee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, July 25th.

Adjourn: Upon motion by Commissioner Nelson and second by Commissioner Forsman the meeting was adjourned.